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FOREWORD

This edition of THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, the 62nd in print, provides comprehensive coverage of political and economic life at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. The volume is divided into three separate, though complementary, sections. In Part One a collection of introductory essays discusses the most pertinent issues affecting the region. Topics covered include the growth of political Islam and the intellectual origins of the movement, and the issue of Kurdish political autonomy and identity. This section also includes an essay discussing in depth the issue of the nuclear proliferation in the region. In Part Two specialist authors, researchers and commentators examine in detail the main political and economic events in each of the countries and territories in the region. In addition, all statistical and directory material has been thoroughly updated. Extensive coverage of international organizations and research bodies active in the Middle East and North Africa is included in a section of Regional Information, together with bibliographies of essential books and journals. A calendar of the key political events of 2014–15 enables rapid reference to the main developments.

The year under review was marked by progress in attempts to re-establish diplomatic and economic relations between Iran and Western countries, with the signing in July 2015 of a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action over the former's pursuit of a nuclear programme, but also by growing political instability elsewhere in the region. The multi-party civil conflict in Syria showed no sign of abating. A US-led coalition continued to conduct air strikes against the radical Islamist militant grouping Islamic State, which controlled large areas of northern Syria and Iraq, while Iran and Russia gave military support to President Bashar al-Assad. Moreover, militants affiliated to Islamic State expanded their presence in a number of other countries, not least Libya, where the group had taken control of towns in the north-east amid an ongoing dispute between rival governments. Meanwhile, in February 2015 Yemeni President Abd al-Rabbuh Mansur al-Hadi and his Government were forced to flee the capital, San'a, under assault by Shi'a Muslim al-Houthi militants and forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. In the following month Saudi Arabia and other members of the League of Arab States—most notably including Egypt, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates—began a military campaign against the al-Houthis and Saleh's troops, prompting fears of a humanitarian disaster in Yemen: in September the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees stated that more than 100,000 people had fled the country since the Saudi-led intervention, while some 1.5m. people were thought to have been displaced.

Other events covered in this edition include government reorganizations in Algeria, Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, the Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Turkey; elections in Bahrain, Israel, Tunisia and Turkey; and the accession of Salman ibn Abd al-Aziz Al Sa'ud as King of Saudi Arabia in January 2015.

The entire content of the print edition of THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA is available online at www.europaworld.com. This prestigious resource incorporates sophisticated search and browse functions as well as specially commissioned visual and statistical content. An ongoing programme of updates of key areas of information ensures currency of content, and enhances the richness of the coverage.

The Editors would like to express their thanks to all the contributors for their articles and advice, as well as to the numerous governments and organizations that provided statistical and other information.

September 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editors gratefully acknowledge the interest and co-operation of all the contributors to this volume, and of numerous national statistical and information offices, and government departments, as well as embassies in London and throughout the region, whose kind assistance in updating the material contained in THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA is greatly appreciated.

We acknowledge particular indebtedness for permission to reproduce material from the following publications: the United Nations' statistical databases and *Demographic Yearbook, Statistical Yearbook, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, Industrial Commodity Statistics Yearbook* and *International Trade Statistics Yearbook*; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's *Statistical Yearbook* and Institute for Statistics database; the Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' statistical database; the statistical databases of the UNCTAD/WTO International Trade Centre; the statistical databases of the World Health Organization; the International Labour Office's statistical database and *Yearbook of Labour Statistics*; the World Bank's *World Bank Atlas, Global Development Finance, World Development Report* and *World Development Indicators* database; the International Monetary Fund's statistical database, *International Financial Statistics* and *Government Finance Statistics Yearbook*; the World Tourism Organization's *Compendium* and *Yearbook of Tourism Statistics*; the US Geological Survey; the International Telecommunication Union; the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia's *National Accounts Studies of the ESCWA Region*; Lloyd's List; and *The Military Balance 2015*, a publication of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Arundel House, 13–15 Arundel Street, London WC2R 3DX, United Kingdom. We are also grateful to the Israeli embassy, London, for the use of two maps illustrating the disengagement agreements between Israel and Egypt, and Israel and Syria (both 1974).

The following publication has been of special value in providing regular coverage of the affairs of the Middle East and North Africa region: *Middle East Economic Digest*.

HEALTH AND WELFARE STATISTICS: SOURCES AND DEFINITIONS

Total fertility rate Source: WHO Statistical Information System. The number of children that would be born per woman, assuming no female mortality at child-bearing ages and the age-specific fertility rates of a specified country and reference period.

Under-5 mortality rate Source: WHO Statistical Information System. Defined by WHO as the probability of a child born in a specific year or period dying before reaching the age of five, if subject to the age-specific mortality rates of the year or period.

HIV/AIDS Source: UNAIDS. Estimated percentage of adults aged 15 to 49 years living with HIV/AIDS. < indicates 'fewer than'.

Health expenditure Source: WHO Statistical Information System.

US $ per head (PPP)

International dollar estimates, derived by dividing local currency units by an estimate of their purchasing-power parity (PPP) compared with the US dollar. PPPs are the rates of currency conversion that equalize the purchasing power of different currencies by eliminating the differences in price levels between countries.

% of GDP

GDP levels for OECD countries follow the most recent UN System of National Accounts. For non-OECD countries a value was estimated by utilizing existing UN, IMF and World Bank data.

Public expenditure

Government health-related outlays plus expenditure by social schemes compulsorily affiliated with a sizeable share of the population, and extrabudgetary funds allocated to health services. Figures include grants or loans provided by international agencies, other national authorities, and sometimes commercial banks.

Access to water and sanitation Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme on Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP) (Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation, 2013 update). Defined in terms of the percentage of the population using improved facilities in terms of the type of technology and levels of service afforded. For water, this includes house connections, public standpipes, boreholes with handpumps, protected dug wells, protected spring and rainwater collection; allowance is also made for other locally defined technologies. Sanitation is defined to include connection to a sewer or septic tank system, pour-flush latrine, simple pit or ventilated improved pit latrine, again with allowance for acceptable local technologies. Access to water and sanitation does not imply that the level of service or quality of water is 'adequate' or 'safe'.

Carbon dioxide emissions Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators database, citing the Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center (sponsored by the US Department of Energy). Emissions comprise those resulting from the burning of fossil fuels (including those produced during consumption of solid, liquid and gas fuels and from gas flaring) and from the manufacture of cement.

Human Development Index (HDI) Source: UNDP, *Human Development Report* (2014). A summary of human development measured by three basic dimensions: prospects for a long and healthy life, measured by life expectancy at birth; knowledge, measured by adult literacy rate (two-thirds' weight) and the combined gross enrolment ratio in primary, secondary and tertiary education (one-third weight); and standard of living, measured by GDP per head (PPP US $). The index value obtained lies between zero and one. A value above 0.796 indicates very high human development, between 0.710 and 0.796 high human development, between 0.534 and 0.710 medium human development, and below 0.534 low human development. A centralized data source for all three dimensions was not available for all countries. In some cases other data sources were used to calculate a substitute value; however, this was excluded from the ranking. Other countries, including non-UNDP members, were excluded from the HDI altogether. In total, 187 countries were ranked for 2013.

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